

Ecclesiastes 3:11:

*"He has made
everything beautiful
in its time."*

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John and Bev Cooper

Field Ministry Leaders
for
Northern California/Nevada



PART OF A
BIGGER
STORY

This year, Cru is celebrating 75 years of ministry. As I reflect on this milestone, I find myself thinking less about organizational achievements and more about the faithfulness of God. Cru President David Robbins recently observed that the story of these 75 years is not primarily found in what has been built, but in what has been passed from one generation to the next: men and women walking closely with Jesus and repeatedly saying "yes" to His call.

That perspective resonates deeply with Bev and me. The strength of Cru has never been its strategies, programs, or size. Rather, it has been ordinary people whose lives have been transformed by Christ and who have chosen to help others know Him. From college campuses to homes and marriages, God continues to work through people who simply stay close to Jesus and make Him known.

As FamilyLife celebrates 50 years of ministry, we are especially grateful for our roots within Cru. FamilyLife's story is part of a much larger story that began long before us. For five decades, we have had the privilege of helping strengthen marriages and families, but we do so as part of the same mission that has guided Cru since 1951: helping people know Jesus and grow in their faith. Whether through a *Weekend to Remember* getaway, a conversation with a struggling couple, or a family seeking biblical guidance, we see lives being changed because of the gospel. We are thankful to be part of that legacy and grateful for partners like you who help carry it forward.

As we celebrate Cru's 75th anniversary, we are reminded that the mission has always been larger than any one person or generation. We are grateful to be part of a story that

began long before us and, by God's grace, will continue long after us.

Our prayer is simple: that we would continue to stay close to Jesus, love Him deeply, and faithfully join Him in reaching the people He places in our path. The mission remains urgent, and we are thankful that God continues to invite us to participate in His work.



As fall approaches, FamilyLife's Weekend to Remember® events are gearing up across the country, inviting couples to step away from the noise of everyday life and rediscover the joy of connection. Whether you've been married for decades or are

newly navigating life together, this season's getaways offer a fresh reminder that every marriage can grow stronger through intentional time, biblical truth, and practical tools.

Each weekend is designed to help couples laugh together again, listen more intentionally, and lean into God's design for marriage. Attendees hear relatable stories, gain insights they can apply immediately, and enjoy meaningful time together without the usual distractions of work, schedules, and responsibilities.

For many couples, the greatest gift is simply having the opportunity to pause, reconnect, and look honestly at where their marriage is today and where they hope it will be tomorrow. One couple chose to do just that, and this was their experience:

"After 29 years together, 15 years as barely roommates, I believe we have an opportunity and tools to grow in oneness like we were created to be."— Wife of 29 years

Her words capture what we often see at *Weekend to*

Remember. Whether a marriage is struggling, simply feeling disconnected, or doing well and looking to grow stronger, God uses these weekends to renew hope and help couples take meaningful next steps together.

But the impact doesn't stop with the couples who attend. Stronger marriages create stronger families, healthier friendships, and more vibrant communities. Many couples leave a *Weekend to Remember* with a renewed desire not only to invest in their own marriage but also to encourage and serve the couples around them. A simple invitation, a conversation over coffee, or sharing what God has done in their relationship can become the beginning of transformation in someone else's life.

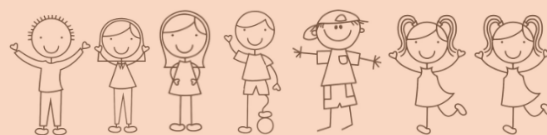
If you've never attended a *Weekend to Remember*, this is the perfect year to start. And if you have attended before, consider inviting another couple to join you. Marriage ministry is often most effective when it happens through relationships. As couples experience hope and renewal in their own marriages, they become better equipped to extend that same hope to their neighbors, friends, coworkers, and church community.

Why not create a weekend adventure of your own? Choose a destination where the two of you can step away from the noise of everyday life and invest in what matters most. Visit WeekendtoRemember.com to explore getaway locations and consider setting aside a weekend for your marriage this year.

Please pray with us that God would prepare the hearts of the couples who will attend this season, strengthen marriages, and use these weekends to bring hope and transformation to families and communities across the country.



*Investing in what
matters most,
John & Bev*



FAMILY UPDATE & PRAYER

This summer provided several opportunities for Bev and me to slow down and enjoy time with family and friends.

In June, we traveled to Missouri to visit Bev's mom and then spent several days together in Branson, making memories with family—especially with our granddaughter. One unexpected change this summer was welcoming our daughter Brittany into our home. Due to some health challenges, she temporarily moved from Washington to live with us, and we've been grateful for the extra time together during this season. One of the highlights of the summer was celebrating our nation's 250th anniversary with our church's community picnic and fireworks celebration.

We also made time for a few outdoor adventures. I had the opportunity to explore the Sierra Nevada mountains with my friend in his side-by-side, taking in the beauty of God's creation and enjoying some much-needed recreation. Later in the summer, I loaded up my bicycle and headed to Lake Tahoe for a full day of riding around Palisades Tahoe and along the lake.

Whether traveling with family, reconnecting with loved ones, or enjoying the outdoors, we were reminded once again of God's faithfulness and the importance of taking time to rest, recharge, and enjoy the relationships He has given us.

➤ **Please pray for the Mindful Marriage Conference on September 17-18.** FamilyLife's Ron and Nan Deal will be featured speakers. We've partnered with a local church to host this event, and after more than a year of planning, we're trusting God to use it to strengthen marriages, families, and relationships throughout our community.

➤ **Please pray for our upcoming Spanish One-Day marriage event in San Jose on October 17.** We especially need God's help in spreading the word throughout the local Hispanic community. Pray that churches, ministry partners, and individuals will help invite couples and that God will draw those who can benefit most from this event.

➤ **Please pray for Brittany's health and complete healing.** We are grateful to have her living with us during this season. Please pray for clear answers, renewed strength, and continued progress toward recovery.

Talking to your kids

when the world feels unsafe

Every family handles these conversations differently. Some choose to limit exposure to the news, while others process current events together. Children, however, are naturally curious and will often have questions about what they hear from friends, at school, or online. Younger children may need simple explanations and reassurance. Older children and teens often want to explore the details, ask hard questions, and discuss differing perspectives. While every child is unique, a few basic principles can help parents navigate these conversations with wisdom, grace, and confidence.



Speak Truthfully, but Keep It Age Appropriate

When your children ask about difficult events, answer honestly while considering their age and emotional maturity. Ask what they have already heard and gently correct any misinformation. Older children and teens may already be getting information from friends, social media, or other sources, so it is important to create a safe space for thoughtful discussion.

You do not need to have all the answers. Often, what children need most is a calm and trusted adult who is willing to listen, answer honestly, and reassure them that they are loved and not facing their fears alone.



Limit Media and Create Space for Connection

Today's news cycle can bring a constant stream of alarming images and stories into our homes. Younger children especially do not need repeated exposure to graphic images or distressing videos.

Consider taking periodic breaks from news and social media. Instead, use that time to connect as a family. Play a game, take a walk, share highs and lows from the day, or simply enjoy being together. When life feels chaotic, children need reminders that some things remain constant, including your love, presence, and care.



Help Them See the Good

Fred Rogers famously recalled his mother's advice:

"When I was a boy and would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.'"

Even in difficult circumstances, there are always people serving, protecting, comforting, and caring for others. Help your children notice first responders, volunteers, neighbors,

teachers, pastors, and everyday people who step forward to help.

Better yet, encourage your children to become helpers themselves. Small acts of kindness, generosity, and service remind children that they can make a positive difference in the lives of others.

Pray with them.



Let your children see you relying on the Prince of Peace. Model for them how to take your worries, your burdens and fears, your concerns and heartache over a deeply divided and hurting world, and give them to God through prayer.

And lead your kids in praying for those experiencing tragedy. As you're talking to your kids, here are four ways to pray.

- 1. Pray for the safety of those impacted.** Have your kids pray for kids just like them, that God would protect them from harm and fear. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous man runs into it and is safe" (Proverbs 18:10).
- 2. Pray for those who mourn.** Ask God to comfort those experiencing the loss of friends and family, their homes, and sense of security. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted" (Matthew 5:4).
- 3. Pray that believers would not lose faith but maintain hope.** "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope" (Jeremiah 29:11).
- 4. Pray for peace when life feels chaotic.** "I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

† Excerpted from *FamilyLife.com* by Lisa Lahey